Lebanon: Rebuilding Amongst the Ruins
October 2009

The Lebanese people have been involved in wars and conflicts since 1975. For the vast majority in southern Lebanon, the result has been serious economic decline and a general lack of prosperity and business opportunities. Hope has all but disappeared for many.

Based in Tyre, the office of Millennium-Canada has started an integrated microfinance program to assist those who want to rebuild or begin new businesses. We want to invest in the lives of many who've suffered through these decades of hardship and neglect.

The program is having a positive impact on our small business clients who live in and around Tyre.

As of March 2010, there are 16 clients in the program and 18 microloans have been issued. This includes two loans to clients who paid off their initial loans and wanted to continue growing their businesses. 70% of the loans are being repaid per the contract terms. We are working with those who have encountered difficulties, and they continue to make regular payments on their loans. Our vision is to double the number of clients by the end of 2010. Our long-term focus for growth reaches out to 2012.

We know that money alone is not the answer. To help ensure the client's success, our fledgling program combines business training modules and foreign language acquisition along with the microcredit loans. Improving skills in accounting/bookkeeping, marketing, business and financial planning greatly improve the odds that a business will flourish.

Lives are being transformed in southern Lebanon, but our goal reaches beyond improving the lives of individual clients. As their businesses grow and prosper, families and communities are strengthened. Hope is renewed.

 Help us keep hope alive in Tyre

You can help us fulfil our vision to grow this micro loan program giving new life to the people of southern Lebanon. We are actively seeking new microloan capital. There are many ways to donate and we welcome business investment as well. Contact us now for more information: **millennium@mrds.org**